

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 22, 2004 has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully request an acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority that was filed on November 27, 2000 along with certified copies of the foreign applications.

Claim 104 is cancelled without prejudice. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claims 66-103, 105 and 106 are allowed. Entry of the current amendments is respectfully requested because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance; (b) do not raise new issues requiring further consideration or search; and (c) do not raise the issue of new matter.

Upon entry of this Response, claims 66-103, 105 and 106 will be pending in the present application.


The Office Action rejected claim 104 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,809,019 to Ichihara et al. (Ichihara). It is respectfully submitted, that this rejection is moot in light of the cancellation of claim 104. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicants' undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,



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